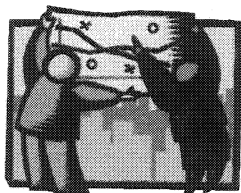


Chapter 4: Nutrition Education



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Chapter 4 *Nutrition Education*

Module 1: Nutrition and Healthy Eating

 **Step Up and Step Out for awareness of healthy eating!**

“Childhood obesity is a national epidemic. The percentage of young people who are overweight has more than doubled in the past 30 years.” (1)

Many children are flunking eating! (2)

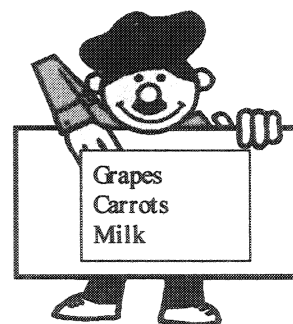
- ♥ Only 2% percent meet recommendations of the Food Guide Pyramid
- ♥ Less than 15% of school children eat the recommended servings of fruit a day
- ♥ Less than 20% eat the recommended servings of vegetables a day
- ♥ About 25% eat the recommended servings of grains
- ♥ Only 19 percent of girls ages 9 to 19 meet their calcium requirement
- ♥ Only 16% of school children meet the guideline for saturated fat on any given day

How can we be part of the solution?

Picture a world where....

When we go to the movies our snack choices are fresh grapes, baby carrots, and milk...instead of candy and pop...

That world isn't too realistic, or even necessary for healthy eating, but it provides a good example of how eating choices are influenced by our environment. If grapes, carrots, and milk were the only choices we ever had when we went to the movies, they would be accepted as “standard practice.”



Factors that impact coalition actions



We need to recognize the factors that shape our eating choices in order to meet the coalition's goal to increase opportunities for healthy eating. Factors include the knowledge needed to make healthy choices, time, income, and emotions. The coalition can affect some of these factors, but not all; and it can't make choices for each community member.

Coalition success depends on:

- ♥ Planning education to teach the skills needed to make healthy choices
- ♥ Providing education to combat "misinformation"
- ♥ Modeling healthy choices until they become "standard practice"
- ♥ Helping to decrease the "problems" that contribute to poor choices
- ♥ Creating environments that make healthy choices available in all situations



All foods can fit in a healthy diet. With good planning, the coalition won't be seen as the "diet police!"



Media Influences on Nutrition Beliefs and Practices

"Life" as we know it through the media:

A 1997 Nutrition Trends Survey (3) conducted by the American Dietetic Association found:

- ♥ 3 out of 4 Americans say there is too much conflicting information about diet
- ♥ 2 out of 7 Young adults (25-34 year olds) say they are doing all they can to achieve a healthy diet
- ♥ 6 out of 10 Americans think they have to eliminate their favorite foods and favorite tastes to have a healthy diet
- ♥ 7 out of 10 Americans firmly believe the "good food/bad food" myth

Why do we often have poor or conflicting information about good nutrition practices?

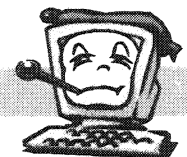
Part of the answer is found in the media, as the result of advertising or “reports”. Examples of a few of the reasons nutrition beliefs or misinformation are problems include:



- ♥ **Mass media images of super-thin models**
Sleek teens and young adults create unrealistic expectations for self-image. These messages often prey on the insecurities of youth, and even adults.
- ♥ **Fast food advertising**
Grab a nutrition shake here, a healthy TV dinner there, drive-thru convenience foods almost next door...and the commercials drone on and on, creating a desire to buy without regard to healthy eating choices.
- ♥ **“Sensationalism” of reports in newspapers/magazines, or on TV/radio**
Because of competition and “sensationalism,” the media doesn’t always allow adequate space and airtime to completely explain the relationships between proper nutrition and healthy living.
- ♥ **“Infomercials”**
“Advice for profit” and advertising leads to nutrition “education” from “gimmicks for sale.” You can “buy” just about any kind of weight loss or health program from the “candy bar” diet to the grapefruit diet or whatever is the current diet flavor of the month. Products are often founded on false or misleading information.

All these things influence our choices. Sound nutrition information is often difficult to identify. How should the coalition sort fact from fiction? The first step is to be able to recognize misinformation.

Warning signs of nutrition misinformation



- ♥ Claims and promises that sound too good to be true, such as “amazing results” or “miracle cure,” that aren’t backed by scientific evidence
- ♥ Use of personal testimonial and case histories from satisfied users as the only proof it works
- ♥ Diet recommendations that are missing one or more groups from the Food Guide Pyramid
- ♥ Information that questions the ability of the medical profession or government
- ♥ The “expert’s” educational credentials are from an unaccredited university

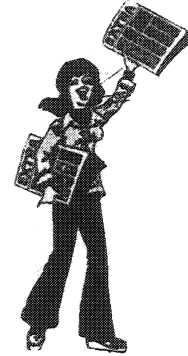
What are ways to overcome nutrition misinformation?

- ♥ Create an awareness of warning signs for misinformation
- ♥ Provide reliable information
- ♥ Teach skills for healthy choices

Examples:



1. Start cooking classes for preparing healthy snacks or meals
2. Begin a regular newspaper column with reliable information
3. Distribute brochures from reliable sources



Rely on the expert for accurate information

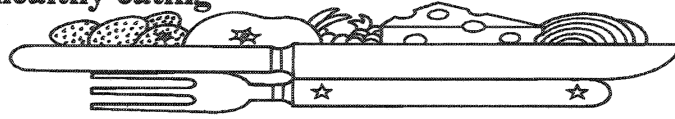
What defines an expert? Some define an expert as an individual who is 20 miles or more from home so nobody from home can dispute their proclamations. Others have earned the title of "expert" because they have devoted their talents, education and professional development toward knowing everything that exists about a single topic.

Your coalition will deal with many "experts" from within your community. Each has a valued, and critical viewpoint to share with your group. Some "experts" will have more sound advice or resources than others. The coalition may not be able to use every resource that comes along, but search for mutual benefits!

Where can you get reliable information?

- ♥ County extension service
- ♥ County or state health departments
- ♥ University food and nutrition departments
- ♥ Hospital food and nutrition departments
- ♥ American Dietetic Association, American Home Economics Association, American Medical Association, American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American School Food Service Association, National Institute of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and others listed in the resource section of this manual.

Reliable guidelines for healthy eating



The United States Department of Agriculture is a reliable source of information. Every five years, U.S.D.A. issues Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The Dietary Guidelines are based on scientific information and guide federal nutrition policy.

The guidelines form the structure for telling Americans that healthful eating and physical activity are keys to a healthy life, and can be used to cut through the din of confusing and conflicting nutrition messages.



Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000, 5th Edition (4)

- ♥ Aim for a healthy weight
- ♥ Be physically active each day
- ♥ Let the Pyramid guide your food choices
- ♥ Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains
- ♥ Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily
- ♥ Keep food safe to eat
- ♥ Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat
- ♥ Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars
- ♥ Choose and prepare foods with less salt
- ♥ If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation

Creating awareness

Here are some ideas for gaining the attention and motivating community members:

1. Demonstrate how new programs and activities will decrease health risks and increase the potential for health care savings



Example:



Healthy eating decreases the risk for obesity; high blood pressure; heart disease; diabetes; joint and bone stress. This can result in long-term savings in health care costs for business.

2. Increase the number of opportunities for healthy eating



Examples:



- a. Providing fruit and vegetable trays at school board meetings as a healthy choice in addition to cookies and punch.
- b. Providing fruit juice and low fat granola bars rather than soft drinks and candy for athletes at sports events.

3. Problem-solve the factors that keep people from eating healthy



Example:



Eating fast foods may be inevitable. Learning how to choose healthy foods at fast food establishments may be the key for some people to change old habits.

4. Determine how small changes can be made



Example:



Add healthy options like bottled water or fruit juice rather than eliminating “traditional” concessions at football games.

5. Create small success that builds to greater success



Example:



A restaurant that finds small success by adding just a few healthy options, will be much more receptive to increasing the options when response is good.



6. Create social opportunities for healthy eating

Remember to factor regional and cultural differences into your nutritional equation.

Example:



Cinco de Mayo (May 5th) creates a great opportunity to have fun and learn about culture and healthy choices in Mexico. The coalition may choose to include the whole community in the activity with newspaper articles, recipe ideas, restaurant promotions, and so forth.

7. Model and share personal tips for healthy choices with others

Example:



Church or other social potlucks can be great social opportunities for modeling healthy choices and sharing recipes to “spread” the potential!

Getting Started

The information collected to create awareness must be reviewed and prioritized according to your coalition’s goals and objectives. Schools, the community, and individuals each set goals and plan actions to make a difference. If the coalition is in touch with “customer interests,” it will be easier to choose a starting place.

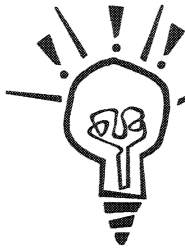
Now, why are you waiting?



References and Resources

- (1) *The School Environment: Helping Students Learn to Eat.* USDA, June 24, 1999.

- (2) News Release: Glickman Announces New Partnership to Promote Healthy Eating in Schools, United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Communications, June 7, 2000. Additional information can be found on website: www.fns.usda.gov/fns/
- (3) The American Dietetic Association's 1997 Nutrition Trends survey data collection was supported in part by a grant from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. For additional information contact ADA at www.eatright.org
- (4) The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000, 5th Edition, U.S. Department of Agriculture Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, www.usda.gov/cnpp. To purchase single or bulk copies of the 5th edition, contact the Government Printing Office 202-512-1800.



Module Tip:

All foods can fit in a healthy diet when there is a balance of choices.

FAQs:

- **Question:** People still think, “diet police,” when the coalition talks about increasing opportunities for healthy eating. How can we avoid this?
Answer: Keep the module tip in mind. All foods *can* fit. It isn't necessary to eliminate traditional food choices. Taking small, gradual steps rather than trying to change everything “overnight” will also help to dispel resistance to change.
- **Question:** How do you involve food establishments when they seem reluctant to change?
Answer: Partner with restaurants to learn how they can benefit from change. Business usually “wins” with an increase in customers and sales! How can the coalition help to make that happen?

Module Glossary:

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: U.S.D.A. guidelines for healthy eating and activity.
Nutrition misinformation: Misleading or untrue advice about nutrition.



Brainstorming Healthy Eating Awareness

- 1. List awareness creating activities for healthy eating. Remember to include activities for all community groups (children, teens, parents, senior citizens, business, etc.).**
- 2. Include these activities in an action plan.**

Children: *For example: Reading a book during story hour at the library that can stimulate a discussion about healthy eating choices*

Teens: *For example: Through coaches at orientations for a new sports season*

Parents: *For example: At PTO meetings*

Senior Citizens: *For example: Through "Meals on Wheels" programs*

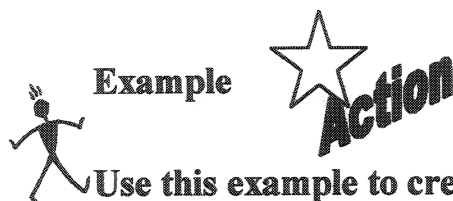


Example

Objective: By 2005 the coalition will use 2 existing community events to increase awareness of healthy eating and physical activity for school-aged children and families.

| Environmental change methods planned. Check all that apply. | Actions and resources needed to implement the plan | Problems to resolve | Who takes action, and by what date? | Review— results of actions Check all that apply. |
|--|---|------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repetition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reward | <p>Action: <i>Make contacts to include nutrition and physical activity at the annual Fall Festival Carnival</i></p> <p>Marketing Plan: <i>Personal contacts to carnival committee</i></p> <p>Resources: <i>Carnival planning committee</i></p> | | <p><i>John contacts carnival committee by 5/3/05</i></p> | <p>Communication:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Great marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Need M-and-M's <p>Time:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good timing <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p>Location:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p>Resources:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Feasible cost <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p>Participation:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p>Overall:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Great-continue <input type="checkbox"/> Good-revise <input type="checkbox"/> Fair-revise |
| <p>-or-</p> <p>Problems resolved:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Time <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <p>Action: <i>Plan activities for the carnival</i></p> <p>Marketing Plan: <i>School/community flyers and newspaper article</i></p> <p>Resources: <i>Supplies for activities, volunteer to write article and flyer, volunteers to distribute flyers, volunteers to conduct the activities</i></p> | | <p><i>Karen finds volunteers for flyer/article by 5/3/05</i></p> <p><i>Tom organizes carnival activities by 6/10/05</i></p> | |

Comments:



Event Planning Tool

Use this example to create awareness and participation!

Title Of Program/Project/Event: Food Guide Pyramid Bean Bag Game

☐ Media ☒ School ☐ Business ☐ Community

Target Audience: (check all planned for your activity)

☒ Students 580 ☐ Parents 55 ☒ Teachers 30 ☐ School meal director and staff ____
☒ School administrators ____ ☐ Business/community leaders/community-at-large ____

Outline/Description/Objectives/Ideas:

Objectives:

- A. To increase awareness of healthy eating choices
- B. To place food in the appropriate food groups of the Food Guide Pyramid
- C. To provide an opportunity for physical activity

Description:

1. Make a drawing of a Food Guide Pyramid large enough to throw beanbags on (approximately 4 ft. x 6 ft.). Depending on the location, you can draw the Pyramid with chalk, or draw it on "butcher paper" and tape it to the floor. Be creative in making your Pyramid colorful!
2. Use cardboard food models from the Dairy Council, or cut pictures of foods from a magazine. Give the magazine cutouts durability by laminating them or using clear contact paper to attach them to heavy weight paper.
3. Place the food models in a box for participants to draw.
4. Have each participant draw 3 pictures from the box.
5. The object is for the participant to throw the beanbag into the appropriate food group box of the Food Guide Pyramid that corresponds with the picture drawn. Each participant will have 3 beanbag throws—1 throw for each picture selected. The participant who places the beanbag in all the boxes appropriately, wins a prize.

Marketing Plan: Include information about the game on a carnival flyer

Resource Materials/Supplies/Food/Handouts:

Food pictures, art supplies for making the pyramid, beanbags, prizes

Costs/Funding Source:

Minimal

Manpower Needed:

1-2 people

Space/Time/Date Requirements:

An area slightly larger than 6 x 8 feet

Prep Time:

1-3 hours

Alternate Plan:

Comments: